

Institute of Technology, Tralee

Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report 2017

Based on the reporting period 1 September 2015 – 31 August 2016



The Cyclical Review Process

Please enter a brief synopsis of the overarching institution quality policy which sets out the links between QA policy and procedures and the strategy and strategic management of the institution.

Institute of Technology Tralee is a publicly-funded higher education institution established by statute. The Institute, originally designated Tralee Regional Technical College (Tralee RTC), was established in 1977 under the control of the Town of Tralee Vocational Education Committee (VEC). Tralee RTC became an autonomous institution in 1992 under the Regional Technical Colleges Act (1992) with its remit being:

‘To provide vocational, technical education and training for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the State with particular reference to the region served by the college.’

Tralee RTC was designated as the Institute of Technology Tralee in 1997. The new designation more closely reflected the modern mission of the Institution. The mission of the Institute is to ‘excel in teaching, research and development work for the benefits of students, industry and the wider community’.

The development of the Institute’s Strategic Plan 2014-2016 required the consideration of the national policy objectives of the government and governing agencies such as the Department of Education and Skills and the Higher Education Authority. It was constructed with knowledge of national priorities, international trends in higher education both within the EU the OECD states, past experiences of the Institute, with acknowledgement of potential threats, stakeholder feedback and regional needs. All of these items were considered with the overarching knowledge of the planned merger with CIT and resultant designation as the Munster Technological University.

The Strategic Dialogue Compact developed by the Institute and agreed with the HEA informs the Strategic Plan. The compact is the outcome of a process of strategic dialogue that reflects current national objectives in higher education and sets out to align the missions, strategies and profiles of individual higher education institutions with national priorities, and to agree strategic objective indicators of success against which institutional key performance indicators will be measured and funding allocated. The Compact recognises that IT Tralee is an autonomous institution with a distinctive mission, operating within a regional, national and international higher education environment.

In 2004, the Institute was delegated the authority from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI, then HETAC) to make awards for its undergraduate programmes and taught masters programmes. The Institute has also been granted Research Approval by Quality & Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to deliver Postgraduate Research Degrees at NFQ Level 9 & 10. The Institute provides undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at National Framework of Qualifications Levels 6-10. In carrying out its activities, and in developing plans for the future, the Institute is committed to demonstrating the highest quality standards and to continuous quality improvement and enhancement and to the creation of a quality culture through a quality assurance system covering all of its operations. In the development of this quality assurance system, the Institute, as required by the Education and Training Act 2012, has regard to the QQI’s quality assurance guidelines, QQI’s policy on statutory QA guidelines and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the Higher Education area.

Refer to the QA Manual Section A2: Mission and Vision, Governance and Management, Sub Section A2.1 and Section A3: Principles Underpinning QA Procedures and Framework for Continuous Improvement, Sub Section A3.1 General Principles.

The Institutes Quality Assurance Manual (and supporting documentation) is available to both staff and students internally and publically via the IT, Tralee website at www.ittralee.ie

The Institutes Strategic Plan 2014-2016 is available internally and publicly through the IT, Tralee website at www.ittralee.ie

The Institutes Mission Based Performance Compact 2014 is available publicly through the HEA website at: www.heai.ie

The Institutes Research Development and Innovation-A Strategy for 2014-2016 is available internally.

Note: The Institute is currently in the process of developing a new strategic plan for the period January 2017 to December 2019.

Please enter a brief description of institution-level quality assurance decision-making fora.

Under the IOT Act 2006 or RTC Act 1999 (Baseline Act), the Institute is led by a Governing Body, the roles and functions of which are described in the IOT Act 2006. The Institute's Academic Council assists the Governing Body in the planning, coordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the Institute, and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and activities of the college. The Institutes Quality Assurance Manual (relevant sections referred to below) describes the Governing Body, Academic Council and other governance, management and decision making fora.

Refer to the QA Manual Section A2: Mission, Vision, Governance and Management, Sub Section_A2.2: Governance (Governing Body), Sub Section A2.3: Management (Academic Council, Organisational Structure, President, Executive, General Management Team, Academic Council Sub-Committees, Academic Schools and Department, School Board, Course Board, Coordination Committee, Central Services Structure), Sub Section A2.4: Standing Orders (Academic Council), Sub Section A2.5: Management of Agendas and Minutes of Meetings of Academic Council, Sub Section A2.6: Appendices, including the following items: Item 1: Governing Body Membership; Item 2: Role and Function of the Academic Council; Item 3: Role and Function of the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee; Item 4: Role and Function of the Research and Development Sub-Committee; Item 5: Role and Function of the Institute Post Graduate Committee; Item 6: Role and Function of the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee (Includes Terms of Reference for the QA Audit Committee); Item 7: Role and Function of the Student Affairs Sub-Committee; Item 8: The Annual Course Board Report Forms CBA1 and CBA2.

Note: HR, Estates Management; Information Technology and Systems; External Services; Academic Administration and Student Affairs; Library; and Finance. With respect to decision making all report to the Executive Team referenced under section A2.3 and the Quality Council/Audit Committee under Section A2.6 and Section A3 respectively.

Associated Committees - Other Institutional decision making fora are:

- o Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC);
- o Examination Boards;
- o Examinations and Assessment Review Committee (EARC);
- o Examination and Assessment Appeals Committee (EAAC);
- o Institute Disciplinary Committee (IDC);
- o Institute Disciplinary Appeals Committee (IDAC); and
- o Institute Vetting Committee (IVC).

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Design and Approval?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Design and Approval

Programmes are designed in line with the mission, values, core principles and strategic objectives of the Institutes Strategic Plan 2014-2016 and the Strategic Dialogue Compact with the HEA, involving students and other stakeholders, and in response to regional need and national policy objectives of government and governing bodies.

Refer to the QA Manual Section A4: Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules, Sub Section A4.1: Overview of Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules, Sub Section A4.2: Procedures for the Design and Validation of New Programmes, Sub Section A4.3: Procedures for Modifications to Validated Programmes, Sub Section A4.4: Procedure for Module Development, Modification and Validation and Sub Section A4.5: Appendices, including the following items: Item 1: Programme Proposal Form for Major Awards; Item 2: Programme Proposal submission; Item 3: Assessors Guide for New Programme Evaluation; Item 4: New Course Evaluation Internal Review Assessors Report; Item 5: New course Evaluation External Panel of Assessors Report; Item 6: Response by the Development Team to Conditions and Recommendations Specified in External Assessors Report; Item 7: Programme Proposal Template for Minor/Supplemental/Special Purpose Awards; Item 8: Assessor's Guide for Evaluation of Proposed Modification of Validated Programmes; Item 9: Validated Programmes Major Modifications External Assessors Report; Item 10: Update to Module Descriptors-Template 1-Major Changes; and Item 11: Update to Module Descriptors-Template 2-Minor Changes.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Programme Delivery and Assessment?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Programme Delivery and Assessment

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 highlights areas for focus over the period to 2030. The mission of the Institute, along with the Institutes stated vision and values within the Institute's Strategic Plan 2014-2016, form the bedrock for the goals highlighted within the Strategic Plan which reflect the National Strategy with respect to the provision of quality student centred teaching, learning and assessment and a quality student experience. Excellent Teaching and Learning and quality of the student experience is an agreed strategic objective within the Strategic Dialogue Compact with the HEA.

Refer to the following Sections of the QA Manual:

Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Sub Section A5.2: Anti Plagiarism Policy and Procedure, Sub Section A5.3: Preparation and Production of Examination and Assessment Material, Sub Section A5.4a: Project and Dissertation Procedure, Sub Section A5.4b: Policy and Procedure for the Request for an Extension of an Assignment Submission Deadline, Sub Section A5.5: Access by Candidates to Relevant Examination and Assessment Material, Sub Section A5.6a: Procedures for the Marking of Examinations and Assessments and Recording of Results, Sub Section A5.6b: Entry of Examination Results, Sub Section A5.7: Pre Examination Board and Meetings, Sub Section A5.8: Board of Examiners and Meetings, Sub Section A5.9: Recording Decisions of Boards of Examiners Meetings, Sub Section A5.10: Amendment to a Results Broadsheet, Sub Section A5.11: Review of Provisional Examination Results, Sub Section A5.12: Recheck of Provisional Examination Results, Sub Section A5.13: Processing of Alleged Infringements related to Examinations organised by the Examinations Office, Sub Section A5.14: Processing of Alleged Infringements of Examination Regulations Relating to CA and FEO, Sub Section A5.15: Analysis of Examination Results, Sub Section A5.16: External Examiners Policy and Procedures, Sub Section A5.17: Assessment and Standards Revised 2013, Sub Section A5.18: Invigilator Guidelines, Sub Section A5.19: Procedure for the Management of Certified Absence relating to CA Events, Sub Section A5.20: Solas Assessment Regulations, Sub Section A5.21: Protocol for Students Representing the Institute, Sub Section A5.22: Application for Use of a Bilingual Dictionary During Exams, Sub Section A5.24: Guidelines for Staff Student Meetings, Sub Section A5.25a: Criteria for Referencing and Submission of Written Work; and Sub Section A5.25b: Request for Approval to Depart from Institute Referencing System;

Section A10: Complaints Procedure;

Section A13: Learning Resources and Student Support, Sub Section A13.3: Student Charter;

Refer to the following sections of the Student Handbook: Section A: Student Charter; Section B: Student Rights and Responsibilities, Sub Section 2: Academic Conduct; Sub Section 3: General Discipline; and Sub Section 4: Special Regulations.

Note: A Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement Strategy is currently under development, to be completed by the end of AY 16/17, for implementation at the commencement of AY 17/18. The following core goals of the Strategy have been identified:

- Goal 1: Student Centred Teaching and Learning (including Learner Supports);
- Goal 2: Assessment as/of/for Learning-Assessment Feedback;
- Goal 3: Curriculum Design;
- Goal 4: Academic Professional Development;
- Goal 5: Learning Environment and Teaching Spaces (developing a physical, social and technological environment that supports learning);
- Goal 6: Engaging with stakeholders in Learning Design, Delivery and Enhancement.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Research Quality?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Research Quality

The Research Development and Innovation Strategic Plan 2014-2016 sets out the key priorities and describes the goals to be achieved by IT Tralee during this period. The strategy provides direction and guidance for researchers, staff and stakeholders on the Institute's RDI mission, values and targets. This strategy is in line with the mission, values, core principles and strategic objectives of the Institutes Strategic Plan 2014-2016 and the Strategic Dialogue Compact with the HEA, The Institute has developed five dedicated research centres of excellence which are embedded across the three academic schools. Each of the Institute's research centres has their own individual objectives and performance indicators. The Institute monitors its research centres to ensure each centre is on the correct trajectory to meet its annual research targets and metrics. The research centres are aligned to the National Research Priority areas and Horizon 2020. There are synergies between the undergraduate/postgraduate degree programmes and the research areas of the research centres at the Institute.

In 2013, IT Tralee performed a self-evaluation of its validated research degree programmes which identified key areas for advancement to enhance the leadership, management and governance structures for post graduate research degree provision at the Institute. As a result, a Research Office, now managed by a Head of Research, an Institute Postgraduate Committee (IPC) and an Institute Research Ethics Committee (IREC) was established in 2014. The IPC is responsible for reviewing research degree proposal applications and monitoring postgraduate student progress. The Head of Research is secretary to this committee. The IPC reports to the Research and Development Sub-Committee of the academic council, which is chaired by the Vice President of Research, Development and External Engagement. The ethical review of research proposals (post graduate and others) are a function of the Institute Research Ethics Committee.

The Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar retains responsibility for registration, examination and oversight of the implementation and compliance with all of the relevant quality assurance procedures.

QQI published its Policy and Criteria for the Delegation of Authority to the Institutes of Technology to Make Higher Education and Training Awards (including Joint Awards) in May 2014, to enable an Institute of Technology to validate its NFQ Level 9 research degree programmes and to make awards in respect of those validated research degree programmes under delegated authority from QQI.

Undergraduate: A number of programmes across the Institute have a Research Project as follows:

- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Field Biology and Wildlife Tourism;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Wildlife Biology;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Agricultural Science;
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Early Childhood Care and Education;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Health and Leisure with Massage;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Adapted Physical Activity;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Health and Leisure Studies;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Sports Development;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Wellness;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Physical Education;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in General Nursing;
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Mental Health Nursing; and
- Certificate in Wound Care Management.

Guidelines for students completing research projects within the above programmes are provided to quality assure the completion of same.

Refer to the following Sections of the QA Manual: Section A2: Mission, Vision, Governance and Management, Subsection 6: Appendices (Includes Terms of Reference for the Institute Post Graduate Committee and the Research and Development Sub-Committee); Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Subsection A5.4: Project and Dissertation Procedure; Section A11: Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes, Subsection A11.1: Introduction, Subsection A11.2: Project Proposal and Approval and Student Registration, Subsection A11.3: Research Supervision Programme Supervision and Monitoring, Subsection A11.4: Thesis Submission and Examination; and Section A12: Research Ethics and Integrity at IT, Tralee.

Refer to the Institutes Strategic Plan 2014-2016 at www.ittralee.ie

Refer to the Institutes Mission Based Performance Compact 2014 at www.heai.ie

Note: The current ITT Research, Development and Innovation Strategic Plan 2014-2016 is concluding and a new 3-year strategy for RDI is now under development for publication in Q2 2017.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Student Lifecycle?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Student Lifecycle

The Institute consistently applies predefined and published regulations and procedures covering all aspects of the student's lifecycle, from student admission through to certification. A quality student Induction Programme to the Institute, to the academic department and to the students programme of study is also facilitated.

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 highlights areas for focus over the period to 2030. The mission of the Institute, along with the Institutes stated vision and values within the Institute's Strategic Plan 2014-2016, form the bedrock for the goals highlighted within the Strategic Plan which reflect the National Strategy for Higher Education and the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-19, with respect to priority areas of participation, equal access and lifelong learning. These are agreed strategic objectives within the Strategic Dialogue Compact with the HEA.

The Institute recognises its role and responsibilities to establish, monitor and review as necessary, its policy and provisions in relation to Admission, Transfer, Progression, Recognition and Certification and provide relevant information to the public. Information in relation to Admission, Transfer, Progression, Recognition and Certification is provided to intending learners and the general public through the Institute's website, the Institute's Prospectus, the Institute's Student Handbook and the Quality Assurance Manual. The information within originates from: the approved academic programme documentation; The Institute's Access policy is available at www.ittralee.ie; Progression regulations, including Assessment and Standards and RPL Policy; Articulation Arrangements with the Further Education sector; Pathfinders and other Access programmes; and the ERASMUS charter available at www.ittralee.ie

The Institute determines the National Framework of Qualifications level of new and existing programmes by means of the intended programme and module learning objectives, details of knowledge, skills and competence, which are mandatory elements of new academic programme proposal documents, programmatic review documentation and proposals for re-structure of existing academic programmes. Proposed postgraduate research degree programmes are also required to include learning outcomes at the relevant level. The internal and external examiners for postgraduate research degree programmes will be required to confirm that the learning objectives at the relevant NMQ level have been achieved.

The Banner System is the tool used to collect the data on student progression. The data generated is monitored and acted upon through the QA procedures in place to do so.

Focus on: Admission (access, admission, induction)/Transfer/Progression (info gathering and analysis)/Recognition (qualifications, period of study, prior learning)/ certification (qualification information and documentation).

Refer to the following Sections of the QA Manual: Section A2: Mission, Vision, Governance and Management, Subsection 6: Appendices (Includes Terms of Reference for the Student Affairs Sub-committee); Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Subsection A5.15: Analysis of Results and Subsection A5.16: External Examiners Policy and Procedures; Section A14: Student Admissions, Progression and Recognition, Subsection A14.1: Procedure for Vetting Students for Placement in Environments with Children or Vulnerable Adults-Garda Vetting Policy and Subsection A14.2: Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning; Section A6: Procedures for Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes.

Refer to the following sections of the Institute's website (Current Students) through the IT Tralee website at www.ittralee.ie

Refer to the following sections of the Institute's Prospectus (Student Life, Student Services, Services and Facilities) at www.ittralee.ie

Refer to the following sections of the Student Handbook (Academic Administration and Student Affairs, Student Support Services, Financial Issues, Student Charter, Student Rights and Responsibilities).

Refer to the following sections of the Institutes Strategic Plan 2014-2016 (Goal 2 – Participation, Access and Lifelong Learning, Goal 3 – Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of the Student Experience) at www.ittralee.ie

Refer to the Institutes Mission Based Performance Compact 2014 at www.hea.ie

Refer to Springboard details and lifelong learning / prospectus (ITT Development Office) at www.ittralee.ie

Refer to the following Section of the QA Manual - A5.20 Solas Guidelines.

**Do you have a
Policy/Procedure in place for
Teaching Staff?**

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching Staff

Focus: competence, recruitment and development of staff

High quality teaching is central to the success of higher education Institutes. ITT values all staff and recognises that their expertise, skills and personal commitment underpin the continuing success of the Institute and the accomplishment of its strategic goals. The Institute's Mission Based Performance Compact 2014 with the HEA reflects both the Institute's Strategic Plan 2014-2016 and the National Strategy in Higher Education in this regard. The Irish economic and educational landscape are changing. Learners increasing demand relevant higher education and training programmes delivered in traditional full time, part time modes, as well as in the case of certain programmes, delivery through blended learning mode to facilitate distance and lifelong learning.

The E Learning Development and support Unit (EDSU) was established in 2013. It supports staff in the following ways: Supports staff incorporating technology into their teaching; Provides staff training and user support for Blackboard, IT Tralee's Learning Management System; Collaborates with staff on developing and delivering online and blended learning programmes.

The Employee Assistance Programme is an employee support service designed to support employees resolve personal or work related concerns, which are having an adverse effect on their health and well-being, their job or their relationships.

The Institute of Technology, Tralee is committed to a policy of encouraging and supporting the development of staff in a manner consistent with their career development goals and the strategic goals of the Institute. The level of funding available in any year will determine the extent of support which can be provided. The available budget will be apportioned between: (a) Institute-wide training organised by the Assistant Registrar and the HR Department; (b) an Institute wide competitive fund to enhance academic qualifications and (c) Schools and Departments for individual staff training, conferences, etc. A Staff Training and Development Policy is in place which relates to staff participation in training programmes, staff attendance at conferences and the attainment of additional qualifications by individual staff. All training, courses of study or conferences must relate directly to the individual's work or be aligned to the anticipated future needs of the Institute. In order to keep up to date with developments in education and in the wider community, staff are encouraged to maintain links with their professional membership bodies which may include attendance at conferences and/or seminars. Of particular importance is the enhancement of professional status through the presentation of papers for publication in peer reviewed journals.

Similarly visits or links with other educational establishments and industry may be appropriate. Staff will be encouraged to share with their colleagues any interesting outcomes, research or new developments they encounter when attending.

The Institute provides a comprehensive range of continuing professional development (CPD) workshops each year. The workshops, coordinated by the Assistant Registrar, are based on recurring topics relevant to supporting the competence of academic staff and requested topics from academic staff. These workshops dates are built into the academic calendar. The Institute also provides regular workshops for postgraduate research supervisors under its Supervisor Training Programme. The Research Office coordinates same.

The Institute's Research Development and Innovation Strategy for 2014-2016 highlights the Institute's priority objective to build research activity amongst academic staff and this is reflected in the targets set within the Mission Based Performance Compact 2014.

The recruitment of staff and budget available for staff development has been impacted by the challenging fiscal environment in which the Irish HEI sector currently operates.

The following policies and procedures are in place around recruitment, support and development of teaching staff.

Refer to the following sections of the QA Manual: Section A8: Procedure for Selection, Appointment, Appraisal and Development of Staff, Subsection A8.1: Recruitment and Selection Procedures.

Refer to the following policies and procedures available to staff internally: Induction Booklet for New Staff; Protected Disclosures; Code of Conduct; Child Protection Policy; Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities; Equality Policy; External Activities Policy; Grievance Procedures; Disciplinary Procedures; Prevention and Dealing with Bullying and Harassment Policy; Annual Leave Policy; Adoptive Leave Notification; Parental Leave Policy and Procedure; and Staff Training and Development.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Teaching and Learning?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Teaching and Learning

Focus: monitoring of teaching and learning. High quality teaching and learning is central to the success of higher education institutes. It is imperative that strategically the Institute maintains a firm focus on quality teaching and learning as this will directly encourage educational innovation and excellence. The monitoring of teaching and learning is central to this focus, both internal and external monitoring, involving feedback from the primary stakeholder, the student. Refer to the following Sections of the QA Manual: Section A2: Mission, Vision, Governance and Management, Subsection A2.6: Annual Course Board Report Forms CBA 1 and CBA 2; Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Subsection A5.16: External Examiners Policy and Procedures; Section A6: Procedures for Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes, Subsection: A6.1: School Boards, Subsection A6.2: Course Boards, Subsection A6.3: Course Coordination Committee, Subsection A6.4: Course Handbook, Subsection A6.5: Student Liaison, Subsection A6.6: Students on Course Board; Section A9: Feedback Mechanisms, Subsection A9.1: Surveys and Questionnaires (Survey of Students by Lecturer; Course Survey Questionnaire). The HEA-funded Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) initiative has effectively been in operation since 2014. The Assistant Registrar coordinates survey-related activity and, in particular, their outputs and response to the survey findings. The data is presented to the Institute's Executive Board, the Institute's Academic Council, the local Students' Union, academic and central services departments, and in collaboration a response strategy is implemented. The Institute draws on the ISSE outputs in the planning and implementation of Intervention and other engagement enhancement strategies to inform the enhancement of all aspects of the third level experience of our students. The Student Open Forum was launched by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar in the Academic Year 2012-13. A minimum of two fora are arranged in each academic year. Membership of the forum includes, Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar (chairperson), Assistant Registrar, Academic Administration and Student Affairs Manager (deputy chairperson), Students' Union executive, Student class representatives, Admission Officer, Examinations Officer, Students Services Officer (secretary), Computer Services Manager, Head Librarian, Access Officer. The objectives of the forum are to provide an open discussion platform for student experiences of Institute services and facilities, and where particular issues can be presented for resolution where possible. Minutes and matters arising are reviewed at each subsequent forum meeting. The Institute includes elected student's representatives from the Students' Union in its governance structures. Students' Union president and vice-presidents are members of the following governance structures: Governing Body; Academic Council; Student Affairs Subcommittee of the Academic Council; Quality Assurance Subcommittee of the Academic Council; Programmes and Planning Subcommittee of the Academic Council; Institute Disciplinary Committee (IDC); Institute Vetting Committee (IVC); Examinations and Assessments Review Committee (EARC) in relation to Review/Recheck of Examination Results – as an observer only; and a representative of the postgraduate student cohort is a member of the the Research and Development Subcommittee.

Note: A Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement Strategy is currently under development, as is a review of semesterisation year 1, to be completed by the end of AY 16/17, for implementation at the commencement of AY 17/18. The following core goals of the TLAE Strategy have been identified:

- Goal 1: Student Centred Teaching and Learning (including Learner Supports);
- Goal 2: Assessment as/of/as Learning-Assessment Feedback;
- Goal 3: Curriculum Design;
- Goal 4: Academic Professional Development;
- Goal 5: Learning Environment and Teaching Spaces (developing a physical, social and technological environment that supports learning);
- Goal 6: Engaging with stakeholders in Learning Design, Delivery and Enhancement.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure in place for Resources and Support?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Resources and Support

Focus: QA for appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and research. QA to ensure adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

Refer to 'Staff Training and Development Policy and Procedures' available internally to staff.

The Institute provides a range of learning resources and student supports which meet the need of the diverse student population and respond to the shift towards student centred learning and flexible modes of delivery. These range from physical resources to human support. Students are informed of the resources available to them via the IT, Tralee website at www.ittralee.ie, internally via Blackboard, in the IT, Tralee Prospectus and in the Student Handbook.

Refer to the following sections of the QA Manual: Section A9: Feedback Mechanisms, Subsection A9.1: Surveys and Questionnaires (including Library Survey and Computer Services Survey by students); Section A13: Learning Resources and Student Support, Subsection A13.1: Bereavement Policy, Subsection A13.2: Substance Abuse Policy and Subsection A13.3: Student Charter.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Information Management?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Information Management

The Institute collects, analyses, and uses data for the effective management of its programmes and other central services activities. Both students and staff are involved in the provision of and analysis of information and follow up activities. Effective processes are in place which feed into the internal quality assurance system.

Information on the processes in place are available at the following locations:

- Banner System (Profile of the student; student progression and retention stats);
- QA Procedures: Analysis of Examination Stats (Section A5.15); and CBA 1 and 2 (Section A2.6);
- HEA Compact/ Strategic Plans and KPIs;
- Alumni Statistics / Graduate Employment Surveys – See First Destinations Survey 2015;
- Student satisfaction with their programmes (Student Feedback QA/ ISSE/Student Forum);
- Library Survey AY 2015/16.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Self-evaluation and Monitoring?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Self-evaluation and Monitoring

The Institute monitors and periodically reviews its programmes to ensure that they are achieving the objectives set for them and respond to the teaching, learning and support needs of the students and to the needs of society.

Refer to the following Sections of the QA Manual: Section A2: Mission, Vision, Governance and Management, Subsection A2.6: Appendices including the following items: Item 1: Governing Body Membership; Item 2: Role and Function of the Academic Council; Item 3: Role and Function of the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee; Item 4: Role and Function of the Research and Development Sub-Committee; Item 5: Role and Function of the Institute Post Graduate Committee; Item 6: Role and Function of the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee (Includes Terms of Reference for the QA Audit Committee); Item 7: Role and Function of the Student Affairs Sub-Committee; Item 8: The Annual Course Board Report Forms CBA1 and CBA2; Section A3: Principles Underpinning QA Procedures and Framework for Continuous Improvement, Subsection A3.1: General Principles; Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Subsection A5.16: External Examiners Policy and Procedures; Section A6: Procedures for Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes, Subsection: A6.1: School Boards, Subsection A6.2: Course Boards, Subsection A6.3: Course Coordination Committee, Subsection A6.4: Course Handbook, Subsection A6.5: Student Liaison, Subsection A6.6: Students on Course Board; Section A7: Procedures for Evaluation of Programmes, Subsection A7.1: Procedures and Guidelines for the Regular Evaluation of Programmes; Section A9: Feedback Mechanisms, Subsection A9.1: Surveys and Questionnaires (Survey of Students by Lecturer; Course Survey Questionnaire).

Note: Other student feedback mechanisms: ISSE and the Student Open Forum and Employers/Industry.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Engagement with other Bodies?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Engagement with other Bodies

Focus: QA processes for the involvement of professional bodies, statutory and regulatory bodies in QA.

Refer to the Institutes Mission Based Performance Compact 2014 at www.hea.ie

Refer to the following sections of the QA Manual: Section A1: Introduction (reference to the requirement that Institute QA reflects QQI QA requirements); Section A5: Assessment of Learners, Subsection A5.20 SOLAS Assessment Regulations; Section A4: Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules (reference to Professional Bodies); Section A15: Collaborative Provision, Subsection A15.1: Procedures for the Provision of Collaborative Programmes and for the Provision of Programmes leading to Joint Awards.

With respect to programme engagement with professional bodies, the QA requirements of the professional body are articulated, adhered to and monitored with respect to the particular programme delivery.

Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Provision and use of Public Information?

Yes

Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Provision and use of Public Information	<p>A core value of the Institute articulated within the Strategic Plan 2014-2016 is that the Institute is committed to: ‘operating in a spirit of openness and transparency with our stakeholders, including staff, learners and the general public, through the provision of relevant and timely information in accessible formats’.</p> <p>The Institute publishes information about its activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up to date and readily accessible. This information is useful to prospective and current students, as well as graduates, other stakeholders and the public.</p> <p>This information is available publicly through the following forums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National publications, for example: HEA publications; ISSE; ○ ITT Website; ○ ITT Prospectus; ○ ITT Student Handbook; ○ ITT Promotional Material; ○ Careers Office Publications; ○ Media; ○ Freedom of Information Officer within the Institute to deal with FOI request.
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for DA procedures for use of QQI award standards?	<p>Yes</p>
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to DA procedures for use of QQI award standards (IoT only)	<p>In 2004, the Institute was delegated the authority from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI, then HETAC) to make awards for its undergraduate programmes and taught masters programmes. The Institute has also been granted Research Approval by Quality & Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to deliver Postgraduate Research Degrees at NFQ Level 9 & 10. The Institute provides undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at National Framework of Qualifications Levels 6-10.</p>
Do you have a Policy/Procedure for Collaborative Provision?	<p>Yes</p>
Links for Policy/Procedure relating to Collaborative Provision	<p>Refer to the following Section of the QA Manual: Section A15: Collaborative Provision, Subsection A15.1: Procedures for the Provision of Collaborative Programmes and for the Provision of Programmes leading to Joint Awards.</p>
PRSBs	<p>2</p>
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	<p>First Set of Records</p>
Type of Arrangement	<p>PRSB</p>
Name of the Body	<p>Nursing Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)</p>
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	<p>BSc (Hons) in General Nursing; BSc (Hons) in Mental Health Nursing.</p>
Date of last review or accreditation	<p>16-06-2014</p>

Next review year	2017
Section: Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies	Second Set of Records
Type of Arrangement	PRSB
Name of the Body	Fáilte Ireland
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Higher Certificate in Arts in Culinary Arts; Higher Certificate in Arts in Hospitality Studies; Certificate in Culinary Arts (Total Immersion Programme).
Date of last review or accreditation	01-06-2016
Next review year	2017
Collaborative programmes	1
Section: Collaborative Provision	First Set of Records
Type of arrangement:	Collaborative programmes
Name of the Body (Bodies)	Mary Immaculate College and the Institute of Technology, Tralee.
Programme Titles and Links to Publications	Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Practice.
Date of last review	27-01-2015
Next review year	2020
Articulation Agreements	14
Section: 1 Articulation Agreements	First Set of Records
Name of the Body	University College Birmingham (UCB)
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	MA in Culinary Arts (UCB Programme Delivered at IT, Tralee)
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	26-03-2013
Next Review Year	2018
Section: Articulation Agreements	Second Set of Records
Name of the Body	Methodist College Kuala Lumpur
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Early Childhood Care and Education.
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	29-04-2014

Review year for agreements	2017
Section: Articulation Agreements	Third Set of Records
Name of the Body	St Lawrence College Ontario Canada
Name of the Programme and Links to Publications	BSc (Hons) in Renewable Energy and Energy Management; BSc in Health and Leisure; BA (Hons) in Music Technology.
Date of last review of arrangement/agreement	18-11-2014
Review year for agreements	2017
Section: Internal Review Schedule	First Set of Records
Year	2013-2014
Areas/Units	School of Health and Social Sciences: Department of Social Sciences; Department of Health and Leisure; and Department of Nursing.
Number	3
Section: Internal Review Schedule	Second Set of Records
Year	2013-2014
Areas/Units	School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: Department of Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences and Department of Technology Engineering & Mathematics.
Number	2

**PART 2 - Section 1:
Institution-led QA - Annual**

A piece in relation to the evolution of quality assurance and enhancement systems to support strategic objectives in the reporting period.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

A system was developed and implemented in the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar over the course of the academic year that records and tracks decisions of the Academic Council and its sub-committees. This provides a facility of recording when decisions are to be acted on, by whom and when they have been completed. It also provides a facility for managing agendas and minutes of meetings. A new Registrar and Assistant Registrar were appointed in February 2016. A full review of the existing QA procedures and the QA manual was then undertaken.

Quality Assurance Work Plan of Academic Year 2015/16 reviewed in preparation for planning the Quality Assurance Work Plan for Academic Year 2016/17. The system of dissemination with respect to Quality Assurance procedures also reviewed in preparation for planning for the dissemination of Quality Assurance procedures in Academic Year 2016/17. At a meeting of the QA Subcommittee on June 1st, a decision was made to develop, and implement for the new Academic Year 2016/17, a comprehensive strategy of dissemination of the QA Manual, with Section A5 identified as a priority.

Significant specific changes (if any) to QA within the institution.

Outlined below are the decisions which were made by the Academic Council and Academic Council Subcommittees during 2015/2016 which resulted in changes within the system of Quality Assurance. The recommendations of the Academic Council sub-committees are captured and given effect in the decisions of the Academic Council itself. Academic Council:

- Standing Orders of Academic Council, Amendments to Standing Orders approved incorporating decisions regarding 'Motion to Amend/Rescind a Motion';
- Management of Agendas and Minutes of Meetings, A revised protocol for the Management of Agendas and Minutes of Meetings was adopted;
- Academic Council Annual Report, the Academic Council Annual Report AY 2014/2015 was adopted in December 2015;
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Working Group was established and membership agreed, a sub-group of the Academic Council was established to agree the Terms of Reference for the Review of Modularisation/Semesterisation in Year 1. The review will be inextricably linked with the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy and consequently the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Group and the sub-group of the Academic Council are now working together to develop a common strategy and agree major milestones and deadlines;
- Enhancing the Student Experience: Year 1, Assistant Registrar/ Head of Student Engagement presented her planned proposal for Enhancing the Student Experience: Year 1, for consideration and decision by the Executive;
- IREC, Appointment of new Chair and nominees for vacant seats were approved;
- Progression with Credit Deficit, Progression with Credit Deficit was approved along with the Guidance Notes for specifying prerequisite learning for academic modules, A review of the year-long pilot programme to be undertaken.

Research and Development Sub-Committee - The following items approved by the Research and Development Sub-Committee were further approved by the Academic Council:

- Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes – Institute Postgraduate Committee established in Academic Year 2015/2016 with the use of the Graduate Advisory Committee being piloted for one year;
- Approved Revisions to Criteria for the Selection of Examiners for Research Degree Programmes established in Academic Year 2015/2016;
- Nominations of External Examiners for Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes were approved;
- Variation and Withdrawal, Deferral Request Form and Biannual Progress Report Form approved.

Student Affairs Sub-Committee - The following items approved by the Student Affairs Sub-Committee were further approved by the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee of the Academic Council:

- A13.1 Institute Bereavement Protocol;
- A13.4 Reasonable Accommodations Policy.

Quality Assurance Sub-Committee - The following items approved by the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee were further approved by the Academic Council:

- A5.3 Procedure for the Preparation and Production of Examination and Assessment Materials;
- A5.5 Access by Candidate to Relevant Examination Related Materials and Documentation;
- A5.6a Procedure for the Marking of Examinations and Assessment and Recording of Results;
- A5.6b Procedure for the Entry of Examination Results;
- A5.10 Amendment to a Results Broadsheet;
- A5.11 Request by Student for Review of Provisional Examination Results;
- A5.12 Request by Student for Recheck of Provisional Examination Results;
- A5.13 Processing of Alleged Infringements relating to Examinations Organised by the Examinations Office;
- A5.14 Processing of Alleged Infringements of Examination Regulations relating to Continuous Assessment (CA) and Final Examination (Other) (FE(O)); A5.18 Invigilators Guidelines;
- A5.19 Procedure for Management of Certified Absence relating to CA Events;
- A5.20 SOLAS Regulations;
- A5.22 Application for Use of Bilingual Dictionary During Exams;
- A5.25b Request for Approval to Depart from Institute Referencing System;
- A13.1 Institute Bereavement Protocol.
- A13.4 Reasonable Accommodations Policy.

Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee - The following items approved by the Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee were further approved by the Academic Council:

- New and replacement External Examiners for taught undergraduate programmes;
- Modifications to the BEng in Manufacturing Engineering Approved Course Schedules for Semesters 5 and 6 for International Students approved; Proposed development of a BA (Hons) in Social Care;
- Proposed development of the BA in Early Childhood Practice as a Joint Award with MIC/UL;
- Programme Proposal – Certificate in Building Information Management – approved for Desk Review;
- Proposed amendments to existing BSc (Hons) in Pharmaceutical Science – approved for Desk Review;
- Programme Proposal – Certificate in Biopharmaceutical Processes - approved for external panel review;
- Programme Proposal – Certificate in Wildlife Professional Practice - approved for external panel review;
- Programme Proposal – Certificate in Environmental Science – approved for Desk Review;
- Programme Proposal – Certificate in Applied Biology & Applied Chemistry - approved for Desk Review;
- Programme Proposal – BSc (Hons) in Veterinary Bioscience - approved for external panel review;
- Amendments to BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Care and Education – approved for Desk Review;
- Draft Academic Calendar Academic Year 2016/2017;
- Draft Academic Council and Sub Committee Meetings AY 2016/2017;
- Programme Proposal - BA in Counselling and Psychotherapy - approved;
- Programme Proposal Special Purpose Award - Dance in Ireland: Historical and Cultural Perspectives – approved;
- Programme changes to BA (Hons) in Creative Writing.

General Activities:

- Amárach Research - A presentation on the findings by Amárach Consulting Research (Focus: Marketing of the Institute with respect to Student Recruitment) was delivered to the Academic Council covering stakeholder perspectives, recommendations and conclusions. A subsequent presentation was provided to the Academic Council outlining the action items identified by the Executive to address the recommendations made by Amárach Consulting;
- Academic Calendar: The Autumn 2016 Academic Calendar was adopted; The Academic Calendar for AY 2016/2017 was adopted;
- Schedule of Academic Council and its Sub-Committees meeting dates for AY 2016/2017 were adopted incorporating the scheduling of examinations prior to/post-Christmas, processing of results for semester 1 prior to the commencement of semester 2 and moving the mid-term break in semester 2 to incorporate St. Patricks Day.

The schedule of QA governance meetings for the period should be inserted here.

Schedule of **Governing Body** Meetings in Academic Year 2015/2016:

- Wednesday, 23rd September 2015;
- Wednesday, 21st October 2015 (cancelled as too close to November meeting);
- Saturday, 7th November 2015 (Re-scheduled from 21.10.15);
- Wednesday, 18th November 2015;
- Wednesday, 25th November 2015 (additional / re-scheduled meeting);
- Wednesday, 16th December 2016;
- Tuesday, 5th January 2016 (special meeting);
- Tuesday, 26th January 2016 (additional / re-scheduled meeting);
- Wednesday, 27th January 2016 (re-scheduled to 26.1.16);
- Wednesday, 24th February 2016;
- Thursday, 7th April 2016 (additional meeting);
- Wednesday, 27th April 2016;
- Wednesday, 25th May 2016;
- Wednesday, 22nd June 2016.

Additional **Governing Body – Section 12** Meetings held with Chairperson of Governing Body, ITT president and Vice President Corporate Affairs (secretary):

- Wednesday, 16th September 2015;
- Thursday, 11th February 2016;
- Thursday, 3rd March 2016;
- Friday, 15th April 2016;
- Thursday, 12th May 2016;
- Friday, 29th July 2016;
- Friday, 26th August 2016.

Schedule of **Academic Council** Meetings - Academic Year 2015/2016:

- Monday, 21st September 2015;
- Monday, 5th October 2015;
- Tuesday, 13th October 2015;
- Monday, 2nd November 2015;
- Monday, 9th November 2015;
- Monday, 14th December 2015;
- Monday, 8th February 2016;
- Wednesday, 17th February 2016;
- Monday, 22nd February 2016 (Induction Training for newly elected AC members);
- Monday 29th February 2016 (Cancelled and re-scheduled to March 2016);
- Wednesday, 16th March 2016;
- Monday, 4th April 2016;
- Thursday, 21st April 2016;
- Monday, 25th April 2016;
- Monday, 16th May 2016;
- Tuesday, 14th June 2016.

Meetings of Sub-Committees of Academic Council

Schedule of **Planning** Sub-Committee Meetings - Academic Year 2015/2016 (this Sub-Committee was re-titled to

Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee by the Academic Council at their meeting of 25th April 2016):

- Monday, 7th September 2015;
- Monday, 12th October 2015;
- Monday, 23rd November 2015;
- Monday, 7th December 2015;
- Monday, 22nd February 2016 (Cancelled – AC elected members appointed to Sub-Committees at the Academic Council meeting of 4th April 2016);
- Friday, 22nd April 2016;
- Monday, 30th May 2016;
- Friday, 3rd June 2016.

Schedule of **Quality Assurance** Sub-Committee Meetings - Academic Year 2015/2016:

- Monday, 28 September 2015 (Cancelled and re-scheduled to Friday, 9th October 2015);
- Friday, 9th October 2015;
- Monday, 19th October 2015;
- Tuesday, 27th October 2015 (originally scheduled for Wednesday 28th October 2015 but date amended to facilitate full attendance);
- Friday, 13th November 2015;
- Monday, 30th November 2015;
- Friday, 18th December 2015 (Cancelled due to insufficient quorum);
- Monday, 18th January 2016 (Cancelled - AC elected members appointed to Sub-Committees at the Academic Council meeting of 4th April 2016);
- Monday, 15th February 2016 (Cancelled - AC elected members appointed to Sub-Committees at the Academic Council meeting of 4th April 2016);
- Monday, 11th April 2016;
- Monday, 9th May 2016;
- Wednesday, 1st June 2016.

Schedule of **Research and Development** Sub-Committee Meetings - Academic Year 2015/2016:

- Monday, 21st September 2015;
- Monday, 16th November 2015;
- Monday, 25th January 2016 (Cancelled - AC elected members appointed to Sub-Committees at the Academic Council meeting of 4th April 2016);
- Monday, 7th March 2016 (Cancelled - AC elected members appointed to Sub-Committees at the Academic Council meeting of 4th April 2016);
- Monday, 23rd May 2016.

Schedule of **Student Affairs** Sub-Committee Meetings - Academic Year 2015/2016:

- Monday, 19th October 2015;
- Monday, 7th December 2015;
- Monday, 14th March 2016 (Cancelled - AC elected members appointed to Sub-Committees at the Academic Council meeting of 4th April 2016);
- Monday, 16th May 2016 (re-scheduled to Monday, 23rd May 2016);
- Monday, 23rd May 2016;
- Monday, 20th June 2016.

PART 2 - Section 2: Institution-led QA - Annual	Reviews in the Reporting Period
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Validation/Programme Approval	3
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Accreditation/Validation.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Programme Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Research Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of School/Department/Faculty Review.	0
Number of internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of Service Unit Review.	0
Composition of Panels: % Internal	0
Composition of Panels: % National	100
Composition of Panels: % UK	0
Composition of Panels: % EU	0
Composition of Panels: % Student	0
Composition of Panels: % Other	0
Chair Profile: % Internal	0
Chair Profile: % Similar institution	100

Chair Profile: % Different institution

0

Chair Profile: % International

0

PART 2 - Section 3: Update on Institutional QA Overview

Other Implementation Factors

This institution can use this section to set out the ways in which data is used to support quality assurance and the management of the student learning experience.

Data used includes data from the following: Application/admission data, Examination data, Progression/Retention data, National data on progression and national/international research on the student experience, in particular with respect to retention and what works in supporting the first year students transition to third level, Irish Survey of Student Engagement, Library Survey, Computer Services Survey, QA1-3, CBA1 and CBA 2, Student Services Survey, Graduate Employment Surveys, Joint Academic Workshops (JAWS), Student Forum, Feedback from Work Placement/industry, External Examiner Reports. This data is used as a feedback and feedforward mechanism to inform quality assurance and quality enhancement.

The institution may choose to highlight in this section information relating to factors that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period. These may be factors relating to national developments or initiatives, such as clusters/alliances/mergers, other external factors or intra-institutional factors.

Factors that have impacted include: the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030; QQI Updates; National Focus on Student Engagement and the Transition to Third Level for Year 1 students; National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.

Completion of the “Strategic Dialogue Cycle 3 HEI Self Evaluation Report” of the Institute in respect of the objectives and targets agreed with the HEA in the Mission-based Performance Compact. The Institute is committed to the Strategic Dialogue process and recognises the significant benefits which the Institute has derived from the process. The Institute reflected on the dialogue process and in particular on the feedback received from the HEA as part of the Strategic Dialogue Cycle 2 outcome. The Institute is in the process of developing a new strategic plan for the period January 2017 to December 2019. In light of the HEA feedback received from the strategic dialogue process, the review of the outcomes of the existing ITT strategic plan and in preparing for the next stage of the Institutes development, the ITT has realigned its structures and resources to address the issues raised.

The Institute:

- Established the Office for Strategy and Institutional Performance, within the Office of the President and appointed a Head of Strategy to lead the above office (April 2016);
- Enhanced the Strategic Planning Cycle and associated processes;
- Commenced the process of the development of an Institute wide performance monitoring and risk management system;
- Redefined and refocused the role of the Assistant Registrar with additional responsibility for enhancing the student experience (both inside and outside the classroom, particularly for year 1 students who are in transition to third level, focusing on student engagement, retention and progression through Institute wide coordination of collaborative action;
- Designing and rolling out of initiatives to enhance student engagement, retention and progression;
- Initiated the process of benchmarking the Institute against international best practice (Initial data submitted to U-Multirank);
- Identified engagement (community and business) as a key priority.

The Institute realigned certain targets in this current cycle, however the impact of the above initiatives will have a significant effect on the next iteration of the Strategic Dialogue Process.

Within the self-evaluation report the Institute has outlined performance and progress against the seven objective areas and associated targets. The majority of targets were met, in some cases exceeded, in a minority of cases targets have not been reached. In all cases relevant background information relating to the achievement of the target or otherwise has been specified. IT Tralee recognises the need for “stretch ambition” with respect to some objectives. Within report, when targets were deemed to be no longer appropriate they were in turn reset. e.g. ‘Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning’, the objective: ‘Increase the participation rate on Institute programmes of new entrants with specific sensory, physical or multiple disabilities’ while still relevant, the cohort of students in question is very small and minor fluctuations have a significant impact on the overall percentage metric reported. In this case the target was changed to the delivery of a targeted pre-entry activity which will provide better gains for the target student cohort. ‘High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation’, the objective: ‘Increase commercialisation activity within the Institutes research centres through licences, invention disclosures and patent applications’. In this case the target has been increased.

Throughout cycle three, certain targets have been reviewed with respect to the “National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education, 2015-2019”, the Transitions Agenda and the National Skills Strategy 2025. The approach taken has been to review original targets with a view to refining targets to identify, where appropriate, more strategic targets than the original compact had presented.

The key Institute objective relates to the creation of the Munster Technological University with our partner CIT. The direct funding from the HEA to support the programme of transformation through merger with CIT and the attainment of Technological University status is welcomed and demonstrates commitment by the HEA to the programme of transformation in the HE sector. As part of this self-evaluation process the HEA requested that three additional areas of focus be considered, and the Institute responded to same. The three areas of focus are: A systematic approach to address any issues of non-progression, with reference to national and international best practice; Implementation of the Transitions Agenda; System and Work Load Management.

Any other implementation issues of interest can be noted here.

Nothing to report

PART 3

Effectiveness and Impact

A commentary about the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures in the reporting period may be inserted here.

The QA policy and procedural changes that were progressed through the academic council sub committees and approved at the academic council, were proposed and progressed based on feedback from the relevant stakeholders that such reviews/ new development of QA was required. Feedback on the effectiveness of these changes on quality assurance will come through the stakeholder feedback mechanisms that are in place.

An evaluation of the impact of QA policies and procedures through their implementation in the reporting period should be inserted here.

Desk Reviews completed in respect of Validation/Programme Approval:

Subject to the Institutes response to the recommendations/commendations of the desk review completed with respect to the programme proposal BA (Hons) in Social Care, the programmes now on offer to incoming students within the Social Sciences department includes a Level 8 Entry point.

Subject to the Institutes response to the recommendations/commendations of the desk review completed with respect to the programme proposals Certificates in Biopharmaceutical Processing and Environmental Sciences, these programmes are now available to the incoming students within the Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences department.

Internal approval/evaluations and reviews completed in respect of review of arrangements with partner organisations resulted in the formal signing of 13 MOUs with partner organisations.

This section should highlight an analysis of the key themes arising within the implementation of QA policies and procedures, primarily through a thematic analysis of key recommendations, commendations and conditions for the reporting period.

Key themes include the following:

- Embedding a Quality Culture and Documented Approach to Quality Assurance;
- Public Information and Communication;
- Quality Teaching and Learning Student Experience, with a focus on year 1 undergraduate students and post graduate students;
- Enhancing the Learning Environment;
- Student Engagement;
- Assessment of Learners;
- Support for Learners;
- Information and Data Management.

PART 4

Quality Enhancement

A description of improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period, identifying the reasons for the improvements (for example an evaluation of effectiveness and impact from the previous period or objectives set out in strategic compacts).

In response to the recommendations of Amárach Consulting Research, the following action items were identified as priority items by the Executive: Greater interaction between the Institute and the town, Improvements to physical infrastructure, Enhancement of the student experience, particularly in year 1, Marketing Initiatives, Enhancement of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

A system was developed and implemented in the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar over the course of the academic year that records and tracks decisions of the Academic Council and its sub-committees. This provides a facility of recording when decisions are to be acted on, by whom and when they have been completed. It also provides a facility for managing agendas and minutes of meetings. A new Registrar and Assistant Registrar were appointed in February 2016. A full review of the existing QA procedures and the QA manual was then undertaken. Quality Assurance Work Plan of AY 2015/16 reviewed in preparation for planning the Quality Assurance Work Plan for Academic Year 2016/17. The system of dissemination with respect to Quality Assurance procedures also reviewed in preparation for planning for the dissemination of Quality Assurance procedures in Academic Year 2016/17. A decision was made to develop, and implement for the new Academic Year 2016/17, a comprehensive strategy of dissemination of the QA Manual, with Section A5 identified as a priority.

Redefined and refocused role of the Assistant Registrar (new appointment in February 2016 of Assistant Registrar/ Head of Student Engagement) with additional responsibility for enhancing the student experience (both inside and outside of the classroom), particularly for year 1 students who are in transition to third level, focusing on student engagement, retention and progression through Institute wide coordination of collaborative action (Note: national and international research referenced indicates that year 1 presents particular challenges for both the HEI and the student, due to the significant social, personal and academic transition experienced by the first year student).

Institute wide working group established, chaired by the Assistant Registrar/Head of Student Engagement, to plan for an enhanced Student Orientation and Induction Programme for Year 1 incoming students of 2016/17.

Student Health and Wellbeing programme of activities, with a number of academic departments promoting and engaging in same. The Institute's president signed an MOU with the REACT Project in June 2016. The REACT Project (Responding to Excessive Alcohol Consumption in Third Level) team are the Union of Students in Ireland, the Irish Student Health Association, the Health Service Executive and UCC Health Matters. The goal of this project is an accreditation scheme which recognises the actions taken by third level institutions to reduce alcohol related harm. An Institute REACT Steering Committee has been established to drive this project.

Agreement to hold monthly scheduled meetings between the team of heads of department, chaired by the Assistant Registrar/Head of Student Engagement. These meetings are focused on establishing institute wide coordination and consistency of approach/quality of Student Engagement, Retention and Progression initiatives and issues. Agenda items being progressed include-coordination of student academic support activities, review of and planning for Summer School for Repeat students, further piloting of peer mentoring programmes, review of student monitoring and early alert practice, use of data to inform department level targeted year 1 transition initiatives etc.

Institute wide working groups established to review and plan for Open Day and Graduation Day.

An analysis of quality enhancement activities that were initiated by the institution. This could also include reference to any national or international quality assurance developments in which the institution is engaged. The institution is encouraged to highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination.

There has been an increased focus over the last decade on Civic and Community Engagement within Higher Education in Ireland. There is a large body of evidence which indicates that student civic and community engagement leads to an enhanced student experience, positively impacts on both the personal and professional development of our students and our graduates, and positively promotes the Institute through its impact on both the student and the community. Civic and Community Engagement is identified in the National Higher Education Strategy as a key mission for HEIs. Following the HEA's publication of the 'National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030' in 2011, the 2011 report states that "higher education institutions need to become more firmly embedded in the social and economic contexts of the communities they live in and serve" (HEA, 2011, p.78). It also affirms that "greater engagement and partnership between higher education institutions and community and voluntary groups offers significant potential to progress equality and community development and to further social innovation" (HEA, 2011, p.76).

A subsequent report from the HEA detailing a strategic plan from 2012 to 2016 indicated the need to "develop and implement new guidelines and criteria on engagement between higher education and the community" (HEA, 2012, p.30).

The establishment of Campus Engage in 2013 affirms the commitment of the HEA to enabling and supporting better civic and community engagement practices in Higher Education (see: www.campusengage.ie). Campus Engage's role is to provide a national platform for the enhancement and coordination of civic and community engagement across the HE sector. In June 2014, 22 presidents of HEIs, including IT Tralee, signed the HEA Campus Engage Charter for Civic and Community Engagement (see attached Charter). In December 2015, the Institute launched the new on line **national** student volunteering database, www.studentvolunteer.ie. Seed funded by Campus Engage, this is an internationally scalable, web based social innovation, and one stop shop portal, connecting higher education students with civil society organisation volunteering opportunities. The Institute also hosts an annual Volunteering Fair, promoting volunteering opportunities to both students and staff. Since 2013, the Institute has in place the President Civic Spirit Award, an award which recognises student's contribution to volunteering. The Institute's commitment to Civic and Community Engagement is key within the Institute's Mission Based Performance Compacts with the HEA.

In September 2015, the Institute accepted an invitation from Robert M. Hollister, Executive Director Talloires Network, to participate in a new project to pilot the Carnegie Community Engagement Assessment Framework in Ireland. The Carnegie Foundation had not until then classified campuses outside the United States, but had granted permission for the Community Engagement Framework to be employed, for the purpose of possible adaptation, in Ireland. This was a year-long Irish study and was the first pilot study of the Elective Community Engagement Framework outside of the US higher education sector.

The Carnegie Community Engagement Assessment Pilot in Ireland was part of a continued national process to find appropriate tools to build an evidence-base of our institution's contribution to civic and community engagement that aligns with the national higher education policy context. This year long pilot now completed, has driven commitment, momentum and practice on the importance and centrality of community and civic engagement within Higher Education in Ireland. The Institute made the decision to undertake the process for the following reasons:

- Institutional self-assessment and self-study: A way to bring the disparate parts of the campus together in a way that advances a unified agenda. At the same time, it allowed for the identification of promising practices that can potentially be shared across the institution;
- Legitimacy: Seeking a new level of legitimacy and public recognition and visibility for the work;
- Accountability: A way to demonstrate that the institution is fulfilling its mission to serve the public good;
- Catalyst for Change: A tool for fostering institutional alignment for community-based teaching, learning and scholarship;
- Institutional Identity: The assessment is a way to clarify institutional identity and mission that distinguishes the institution from peers.

The Carnegie Community Engagement Assessment Pilot Project provided an excellent opportunity to bring renewed awareness, focus and centrality Institute wide to Civic and Community Engagement, and to refocus our Institute strategic planning going forward with respect to same. The Institute is awaiting a final feedback report from the review team.

PART 5

Objectives for the Coming Year

A piece in relation to strategic objectives in the coming period and plans for quality assurance and enhancement.

Development of a new Strategic plan for the period January 2017 to December 2019. To develop this Strategic Plan, a post-performance review is planned with respect to the previous Strategic Plan (Our Strategy for the Future: Strategic Plan 2014-2016), along with both internal (staff) and external (Industry, Community) consultation processes. Under the management of the appointment of a Head of Strategy and Institute Performance, of the Office for Strategy and Institutional Performance (April 2016), a business systems integration office is to be established and staffed with Student Information Systems Senior Staff Officers to centralise data collection and analysis.

Development of a new Research Strategic Plan for the period January 2017 to December 2019. To develop this Strategic Plan, a post-performance review is planned with respect to the previous Research Strategic Plan (Research Development and Innovation: A Strategy for 2014-2016), along with both internal (staff) and external (Industry, Community) consultation processes.

Completion of the ITT Strategic Dialogue Cycle 4 Self Evaluation Report. The Institute will then work towards developing the next stage of the Strategic Dialogue process, aligning Institute Strategic Objectives with national priorities.

A Student Engagement, Retention and Progression Strategy to be developed.

Engagement with the National Student Engagement Programme in 2017.

An Institute wide working group to be established by the Executive to develop a targeted engagement strategy with the second level and further education sectors.

Develop and get approval from the Governing Body for an Institute Risk Register (Financial, Operational, Strategic).

Development of a Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Engagement Strategy, focused on year 1, to be completed by the end of Academic Year 2016/17, for implementation at the commencement of Academic Year 2017/18.

Complete a review of Semesterisation Year 1, to be completed by the end of Academic Year 2016/17, the outputs of which will be implemented for the commencement of Academic Year 2017/18.

Establish an Institute National Access Plan Working group to align the access activities of the Institute with the National Access Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education.

Review Plans: Area/Unit and Number

The Institute Programmatic Review to be completed within the Nursing Department by the end of Academic Year 2016/17, as well as a module review, to meet the requirements of An Bord Altranais.

The Institute Programmatic Review to be completed across all departments with the School of Business, Computing and Humanities by the end of Academic Year 2016/17 (Hotel Catering and Tourism Department, Computing Department, Creative Media and Information Technology Department, and Business Department).

Any further information with respect to plans for the coming period.

Following the review of the Quality Assurance Work Plan of Academic Year 2015/16, develop a Quality Assurance Work Plan for Academic Council approval and implementation in Academic Year 2016/17. The review of QA procedures was traditionally undertaken by the Quality Assurance Subcommittee. The workload to be shared among all of the subcommittees with the various sections of the QA Manual assigned to each of the relevant subcommittees. Each subcommittee to be requested to outline a schedule of policies/procedures to review/develop at the commencement of each academic year. Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy of dissemination of the QA Manual, further to a meeting of the QA

Subcommittee on June 1st 2016 where the decision was made to develop a comprehensive strategy of dissemination of the QA Manual, with Section A5 identified as a priority. Review the Annual Course Board Report Forms (CBA 1 and CBA 2-See Section A2.6 of the QA Manual) and review the systems of Data Analysis of Examination Results, and pilot the updated Annual Course Board Forms (CBA 1 and CBA 2) and a centralised system of Data Analysis of Examination Results. Review of the Academic Year 2016/17 year 1 Student Orientation and Induction Programme, and plan for the 2017/18 year 1 Student Orientation and Induction Programme. A review of student feedback mechanisms, in particular the development of a coordinated survey of year 1 students in semester 1, as well as enhancement of the Institute's ISSE feedback and feed-forward mechanisms. All student engagement, retention and progression initiatives to include a post event review and evaluation to inform best practice for future events. An ITT Institute Wide Student Health and Wellbeing Working Group to be established to plan and promote health and wellbeing activities institute wide, and to integrate within the Institute's culture a coordinated and collaborative commitment to Student (and Staff) Health and Wellbeing, working towards the establishment of a Healthy Campus (Ref: 'Healthy Ireland HSE Action Plan 2013-2015'). Learning Off Campus-Review of Work Placement practice/procedures across programmes and departments towards establishing an Institute wide set of best practice QA Guidelines to support student work placements. Publication of the Quality Assurance Manual (on the Institute's Website). Pilot and evaluate a newly developed Induction Programme for New Staff of the Institute (to include the introduction of Quality Assurance procedures and the shared responsibility of all for quality assurance).

Academic Council and Sub-Committee Plans for Academic Year 2016/17.

Academic Council Meeting Dates AY2016/2017: Monday, 12 December 2016; Monday, 06 February 2017; Monday, 03 April 2017; Monday, 15 May 2017; Tuesday, 13 June 2017.

Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee Meeting Dates: Monday, 10 October 2016; Friday, 04 November 2016; Monday, 28 November 2016; Monday, 23 January 2017; Monday, 27 February 2017; Monday, 27 March 2017; Monday, 22 May 2017.

Quality Assurance Sub-Committee Meeting Dates: Monday, 26 September 2016; Wednesday, 02 November 2016; Monday, 14 November 2016; Wednesday, 14th December 2016; Monday, 13 February 2017; Monday, 06 March 2017; Monday, 24 April 2017; Monday, 29 May 2017.

Research & Development Sub-Committee Meeting Dates: Monday, 17 October 2016; Monday, 21 November 2016; Monday, 30 January 2017; Monday, 13 March 2017; Monday, 08 May 2017.

Student Affairs Sub-Committee Meeting Dates: Monday, 24 October 2016; Monday, 05 December 2016; Monday, 20 February 2017; Monday, 08 May 2017; Monday, 19 June 2017.

Plans for **Academic Council:** Quality Assurance Work Plan to be approved, with QA sections assigned to each of the subcommittees Sub-Committees (in rotation) to be a standing agenda item for each Academic Council; Academic Council Annual Report AY 2015/2016 to be presented; Review of QA Procedure-Research Ethics: Ethical Screening of Research in Taught Programmes and the Minimal Risk Form; Development of Draft Academic Calendar for AY 2017/2018; Analysis of Feeder Schools Data; Consideration of the completed Annual Course Board Forms for AY 2015/2016 (CBA 1 and CBA 2-See Section A2.6 of the QA Manual); Consideration of the completed Analysis of Examination Results Reports for AY 2015/2016; Review of QA Procedure-Postgraduate Declaration of Work Form.

Plans for **Programmes and Planning Sub-Committee:** Approved QA Work Plan; Development of Guiding Principles for the Development of the Academic Calendar; Review of QA Procedure- Terms of Reference for the QA Audit Committee and the Quality Council; Review of the Terms of Reference for the Academic Council and the Subcommittees of the Academic Council; Development of QA Procedure-Embedding Exit Awards in New Programme Development; Review of QA procedure-Programme Proposal Form for Major Awards (to include the embedding of Exit Awards in New Programme Development); Review of QA Procedure-Overview of Procedures for the Design, Validation and Modification of Programmes and Modules.

Plans for **Quality Assurance Sub-Committee:** Approved QA Work Plan; Review of QA Procedure-Procedure for the Management of Certified Absence relating to CA Events; Development of QA Procedure-Policy and Procedure for the Request for an Extension of an Assignment Submission Deadline; Development of QA Procedure-Policy and Application Form for Use of a Bilingual Dictionary During Exams; Review of QA Procedure-Staff Student Meeting Guidelines for Students and Staff; Review of QA Procedure-Anti-Plagiarism Policy and Procedures; Review of One Year of the Pilot Scheme-Progression with Credit Deficit; Development of QA Procedure-Reasonable Accommodations and Support for Students with Disability: A Guide for Lecturers and Academic Staff; Review of QA Procedure-Equal Access Policy; Review of QA Procedure-Complaints Procedure; Review of Systems to Analyse Examination Results; Development of Template for the Development of New QA Procedures; Development of a QA Procedure on Student Feedback on Continuous Assessment.

Plans for **Research and Development Sub-Committee:** Approved QA Work Plan; Development of QA Procedure-Research Extension Request Form; New Research and Development Strategic Plan under development; Development of QA Procedure-Change of Supervisor Request Form; Review of QA Procedure-Registration Periods for Research Degree Programmes; Review of QA Procedure-External Examiner Report Form; Review of QA Procedure-Internal Examiner Report Form; Review of Section A12 of QA Manual-Research Ethics and Integrity at IT, Tralee.

Plans for **Student Affairs Sub-Committee:** Approved QA Work Plan; Review of QA Procedure-Policy for Students with a Disability Who Request to Record Lectures; Development of a Pilot Protocol for the Support of Students whom English is not their First Language; Review of QA Procedure-Student Charter; Review of QA Procedure-Course/Programme Handbook; Review of General Student Conduct and Discipline section of the Student Handbook and development of a Code of Conduct Policy; Review of the Pathfinders Programme; Development of a policy to help staff deal with or recognise risk behaviours in students in classroom interactions; Review of QA Procedures-Student Feedback Mechanisms; Development of QA Procedure-Admissions Policy; and Development of QA Procedure-Progressions Policy.

PART 6

Preparation for Periodic Review

A description of the impacts of institutional review within the institution.

Nothing to report, as not in the period immediately prior to or after a periodic review.

A short evaluative and reflective summary of the overall impact of quality assurance in the reporting period or, over a more extensive period, in the review cycle.

Nothing to report, as not in the period immediately prior to or after a periodic review.

Developmental themes of importance to the institution which will be relevant to periodic review.

Nothing to report, as not in the period immediately prior to or after a periodic review.